

Southern Culture On The Skids sound like a rockabilly band who practice deep in the middle of a swamp in a ramshackle shack you can only get to by boat surrounded by whiskey stills. Their raw rockabilly and blues sound is only part of the story. Rick Miller's songs detail the other side of Southern life -- the one Nashville wouldn't touch with a ten foot pole, the one found in some of Flannery O'Connor's short stories. Songs like "Roadside Wreck" in which a guy puts his girlfriend's body parts on ice after she dies in a crash, or "Nashville Toupee" which Aldo Jones has been singin' in these parts for years, which appears in a totally different arrangement on their forthcoming For Lovers Only. Totally enjoyable, SCOTS' songs have a big chicken greasy grin behind every word.

Maestro Subgum and the Whole are probably the most different act to ever play Dobbs. Their new album Lost Lost Lost (Yoni Yay!) is really Cabaret music with nods to Captain Beefheart, Tom Waits and Kurt Weill. There's a whole lot of singers, plus real piano, trumpet and trombone. The horns which occasionally drift into avant-garde binges are the best part. The vocals are too close to Broadway for my tastes though the lyrics strive to be weird. Still, this definitely is not the same old thing.

Southern Culture On The Skids: Thu., Oct. 1 at 9:30 p.m. Maestro Subgum and the Whole, Sun., Oct. 4, (both groups) at J.C. Dobbs, 304 South St., 928-1943.

--Peter Brown